



nnjbees.org

May 2014



NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

A division of New Jersey Beekeepers Association

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2 nd V. Pres.	Bobby Slanzi	845-304-4333	Treasurer	Karl Schoenknecht	201-891-0947

Meeting on: **Friday, May 16th at 7:30 PM**, Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430**



Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious always welcome!



Weather permitting.



Welcome to May, New Jersey Beekeepers. Spring begins in fits and starts but begin it does. Cool days with rain have put us and the bees back. Nucs delivered, nectar flowing, pollen coming in. New beekeepers have many questions. Bring those questions with you when you come to our May meeting tomorrow. They will be answered.

Yearly Dues are payable now!



Your \$20 yearly dues goes to fund all of our activities, our post meeting refreshments, club supplies and all the other necessities required to bring the best possible programs, classes, mentoring and to introduce new beekeepers to the art and craft of the hobby we all love so much. See Karl Schoenknecht to make your timely dues payment and from all the officers, "Thank you for your continued support."

BEEKEEPERS

Message from the President:

Happy Spring Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

We are off to a less than ideal spring, but at least spring is here! We have already received a few calls about swarms, and I would remind everyone to make sure there is plenty of room in your hives. This is especially important because of all the rain and cold weather we are having. A strong hive with loads of bees is a great thing when the weather is cooperating, but when all those bees are crammed inside during rainy days, it can trigger the desire to swarm. Also remember that bees do not consider foundation as "more room" so, you should try to alternate boxes with drawn comb with boxes of foundation.

If you are a NewBee, I would remind you to go into your hives at least every 11-13 days. One of the most important things we have to do as Beekeepers is check on our hives. Also, by establishing a regular pattern of opening your hives, you will have a better idea of how your bees are doing and how your hives

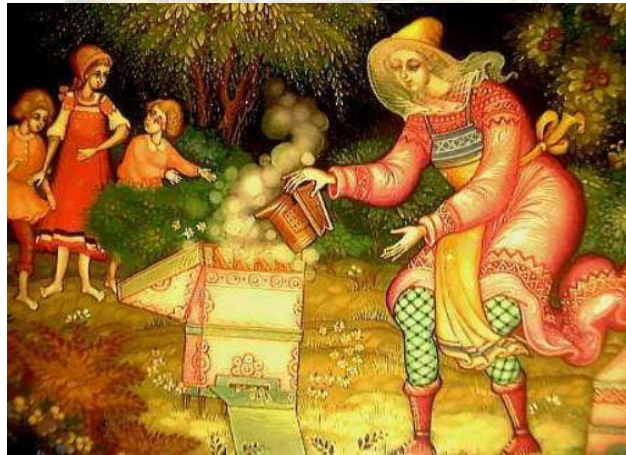
are growing. Or, think of it this way, the more frames of bees you hold and look at, the quicker you will feel comfortable with what you are doing, and the faster you will be able to "see" what is going on.

As a beekeeper, I always enjoy this time of year. It is a beginning, and a chance to try a few new things, or at least for me, not to make the same mistakes I have made in the past.

I also enjoy this time of year because of the increased Bee Awareness throughout our communities. Every year when our part of the world starts to bloom, people are thankful that another winter has passed and the plants have come back to life. Every year more and more people are making the connection between the blooming plants and the role of the honeybee. And now is the time you should be extra proud to be a beekeeper. What you are doing is more than just a hobby, you are making a difference!

I look forward to seeing everyone at this Friday's meeting!

Frank Mortimer
President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers



Attention Members:

New Bee books will be on sale at the meeting this Friday. Stay in the know and help your bee club.

Timely Bee Tips for May

A SWARM CAUGHT IN MAY IS WORTH A LOAD OF HAY; A SWARM CAUGHT JUNE IS WORTH A SILVER SPOON; AND A SWARM CAUGHT IN JULY AIN'T WORTH A FLY.

The objective during the month of May is to have a queen-right, healthy, and well-fed hive so they can build up to maximum populations for the onset of the major nectar flow. This means your bees will constantly be on the verge of swarming but hopefully, never fully to that point.

Yes, May is swarm season and your job is to intervene. Of course, there are many schools of thought about beekeeping. Some say, just let them "bee" and they will do their thing. That is true... and swarming

is the bees natural way to combat Varroa mites. Bees also want survive and their natural instinct is to split and swarm on their own. If we allow them to swarm, then we lose the foraging force we needed to bring in a honey crop. If we prevent them from swarming, then we can also be assured the mites will continue to build in numbers and we will have to deal with them later. Only time impresses experience on us... and in the meantime, we use each other to bolster experience and ultimately determine our own methods of hive management.

Hopefully, you attended one of the local club meetings to hear the 'bee whisperer' talk about catching swarms as this is a whole topic by itself. Traps should have been set into place by the first week in May

The exciting thing about seeing the first swarm of the season is that you know the bees have determined it is time to make queens. Drones will be out flying regularly and mating flights will occur during 75 degree days with winds less than 10 mph. So start thinking about what you can do with new queens.

When you open the hive, look for nectar and pollen stores, and make sure there's a nice laying pattern in the brood chambers. Re-queen if the brood pattern is not satisfactory. Maybe the bees will have already made the decision for you by creating some supercedure cells. Typically, queen cells hanging off the side of a comb indicate a supercedure cell. Supercedures are replacement queens and it means the bees have decided the current queen is not getting the job done. In these cases, you might consider leaving those cells alone.

But how do we determine if a hive is about to swarm? We look for other signs. Is there enough space in the hive? How has the colony population built up between the spring clean out and now? Has it doubled or tripled in the last month? Have you been feeding the colony? A healthy colony of bees should be brimming right about now and each inspection should consider the ratio of available hive space, and the amount of bees. Also, the number of frames of capped brood (bees about to emerge) should be known. If you have two deeps of bees and the bees are occupying 7-8 frames in each box, then you would want to have 2, maybe even 3 honey supers (mediums) on top. More specifically, if you have 4-6 full frames of capped brood, then there will be a boom in population in a matter of days when they emerge. In that case, more supers, or even a 3rd deep on top of the original 2 deeps may be called for depending on your goals for each specific hive.

During the rush to think about new queens, don't forget about the nectar flow. Make sure there is room in the hive for honey before the locust flow arrives (note: it has been as early as April 15th). Keep empty comb overhead and add more supers if needed. Research has found no difference in top-supering vs. bottom-supering and it is one of those highly debatable issues among beekeepers. So, do what is easier for you.

Use this time to make nucs and splits to increase the size of your apiary. If you have a hive that you believe is about to swarm, it might make sense to split out a nuc... or maybe two or three. Take the current queen and put her in a nuc with enough resources to support her, and move her to another apiary if you can. Letting the original hive rear a new queen during the honey flow is a good time to do it. At the same time, you can maximize your honey crop since the bees won't have any young larva to feed.

You should always have a specific goal for each hive. One might bring a honey crop, others may be used to build up and split for apiary increase. As you inspect your hives, and log your notes, over time, decisions for each become more apparent and you will feel less and less overwhelmed on all things we have to think about during bee season. Coming to the meetings and asking questions is a great way to

get multiple views on any topic, and also meet prospective mentors, or friends that can come over and help you out.



Over 1,127 Strong!!!

We quickly blew through the 1000 member milestone and are, as of this writing 1,127 members strong, and growing on our Facebook page! Be sure check it out. See the great pics and stories posted by the Facebook fans we have at our page.

Remember: <http://www.nnjbees.org> is your website! Check that site for everything Northeast New Jersey Beekeeping!

Next Month

In June, our favorite apiarist, Tim Schuler will be talking about mite treatments. A subject we should all learn more about. We will also be taking questions from you and dispensing sage and timely advice. Bee there to ask, hear and learn.



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Judy and Terry Regan	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc
Tom Miller	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc
Rachel Avenia-Prol	Web site creation and training: www.nnjbees.org
Jennifer Phillips	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies and other treats.
John Gaut	NJBA Constitution Committee.
Michael Miller	Apparel production, beekeeping instructor
Hugh Knowlton	Workshop/Event coordinator and presenter
Rob & Gloria Leustek	Legislative Liaisons and Craftsman's Corner